



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS: BELARUS

The IOM programme “Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Belarus” started in September 2002. The IOM programmatic approach addresses three integrated aspects: protection and reintegration, prosecution and criminalisation and prevention. The various components within the overall approach are funded by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) of the US State Department, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). IOM’s accomplishments within the mentioned period include:

1. Prevention by dissemination of information to increase public awareness about the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings and its main consequences. Within the prevention component of the project, IOM succeeded in:

- opening a toll-free hot-line in Brest for consultations on safe work and travel abroad (tel. **8-801-201-5555**);
- publication and dissemination of the school manual “Organization of Work on Prevention of THB” to the relevant educational establishments;
- printing and dissemination of brochures, booklets, posters, information cards and stickers; placement of billboard ads and trolley ads; creation of the website www.stoptrafficking.by;
- holding a number of trainings and seminars (11) for governmental structures, NGOs, journalists etc.; conducting a CT trainings for MFA officials (2);
- organization of networking visits to the countries of transit and destination for NGOs (Ukraine, Moldova, Germany, Montenegro, Russia, Turkey, Denmark, Poland);
- organizing a play-tour of the “Seventh Kafana” in five oblast cities of Belarus; holding 4 press conferences and a range of round tables for governmental structures and NGOs; creation of 4 video- and 3 radio PSAs and broadcasting on the national TV and radio;
- establishment and development of NGO prevention and referral network consisting of 21 NGOs; engaging and capacity building (including trainings) of regional organizations of the Belarusian Red Cross in IOM-sponsored prevention and reintegration CT activities;
- organizing psychological session “Psychological problems during the work with victims of trafficking and the best practices to control them. Burn-out-syndrome.”
- organizing a training of trainers Entrepreneurship course for 17 NGO representatives to deliver training and counseling services in all regions of Belarus to support Micro-Enterprise Development Program for vulnerable women and VOTs;
- organizing the Job-skills Training of Trainers for 19 NGO representatives to deliver the relevant skills on self-presentation, job-search, interview taking techniques, effective resume writing, accountancy and relevant computer skills to 1000 “at risk” women and VOTs in all regions of Belarus;
- arranging a seminar “Identification and Referral of VOTs: Best Practices and Challenges” together with the Belarusian Red Cross Society for NGOs, judicial and law-enforcement representatives.
- conducting around 5,000 lectures for target audience amounting to 96,470 listeners in the regions.

IOM’s PR Campaign, aimed at raising public awareness in Belarus about the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, won in the nomination the *Best PR Campaign of the Year 2003* award for its achievements in the stated objective.

2. Prosecution and criminalization by encouraging law enforcement and judicial structures to act more effectively against crimes in the field of trafficking in women. Within its prosecution and criminalization component, IOM Minsk managed to:

- hold an International Conference for 140 law enforcement representatives from 18 countries of origin, transit and destination;

- provide technical assistance to the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Belarus; equip lecture halls, TV center and a linguistic laboratories of the Academy of the MoI’s investigative department;
- assist the General Prosecutor’s Office in establishment of regional CT focal points; provide computer, copying, digital video- and photo-equipment to 20 units of the MoI, including 2 headquarter units and the specialized MoI CT unit;
- facilitate creation of the specialized CT unit within MoI through provision of technological assistance;
- conduct a research on the mechanisms of trafficking in human beings and printed a manual on the results of that report; prepare and publish a manual for the law enforcement representatives in the Republic of Belarus “Combating Trafficking in Human Beings”; prepare and publish the MoI information bulletins “Combating Trafficking in the Republic of Belarus”;
- organize a number of networking trips for law enforcement to countries of transit and destination (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, France, Turkey, Israel);
- organize a number of trainings for law enforcement representatives; organize 6 regional seminars and 3 trainings for operative and investigative officers of the MoI and the judiciary;
- publish the manual “Investigation of THB Crimes for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation” for specific university students, law enforcement and the judiciary;
- launch the Program of Advanced Specialization under the Course “Organization of Work of Law Enforcement of the Republic of Belarus in the Field of Combating Trafficking in Human Beings” for the students of the Law Faculty under specialization “legal-judicial-investigative activity”;
- conduct 3 CT seminars for judges and prosecutors;
- organize an interactive training course on investigation of THB crimes for MoI regional field officers and investigators and representatives of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Belarus;
- the preparation of English Language Course Book with accompanied listening materials for CT Law Enforcement and students of the Law Faculty under specialization “legal-judicial-investigative activity”;
- launch language training course for 35 CT law enforcement and judiciary officers representing the MoI, Border Guards, Prosecutor’s Office and State Security Committee and for 15 students of the Law Faculty under specialization “legal-judicial-investigative activity”;
- organize an interactive training of trainers “Combating Trafficking in Human Beings” for the law-enforcement representatives of the MoI in Stockholm, Sweden.

3. Protection and reintegration by providing assistance and support to the victims of trafficking, returning to Belarus. IOM Minsk (alone and/or through its NGO partners) assisted **1,125** victims of trafficking since the commencement of the project. The scope of reintegration services offered by IOM includes:

- assisted return to Belarus; airport reception upon arrival to Belarus from the country of destination; escort and/or travel assistance to final destination in Belarus;
- legal assistance with civil issues and for victims serving as witnesses in criminal cases;
- medical examination and treatment;
- psychological counselling;
- reintegration grants to support victims for the first three months after their return;
- employment counselling and grants for vocational training;
- educational support;
- other required assistance determined on a case-by-case basis.

Overall, the staff of the Counter-Trafficking project continues to work in the above-outlined areas by empowering a risk group through provision of job-skills and job-search skills training followed by an internship programme for the trainees and their participation in small business micro-grants scheme. Currently, IOM is in the process of opening a Rehabilitation Center in Minsk for the victims of trafficking with the capacity to provide integrated medical, psychological and social assistance.